

**Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Adams, February 26, 1800 , from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.**

**TO SAMUEL ADAMS J. MSS.**

Philadelphia, February 26, [1800.]

Dear Sir, —Mr. Erving delivered me your favor of Jany. 31, and I thank you for making me acquainted with him. You will always do me a favor in giving me an opportunity of knowing gentlemen as estimable in their principles & talents as I find mr. Erving to be. I have not yet seen mr. Winthrop. A letter from you, my respectable friend, after three & twenty years of separation, has given me a pleasure I cannot express. It recalls to my mind the anxious days we then passed in struggling for the cause of mankind. Your principles have been tested in the crucible of time, & have come out pure. You have proved that it was monarchy, & not merely British monarchy, you opposed. A government by representatives, elected by the people at *short* periods, was our object; and our maxim at that day was, “where annual election ends, tyranny begins;” nor have our departures from it been sanctioned by the happiness of their effects. A debt of an hundred millions growing by usurious interest, and an artificial paper phalanx overruling the agricultural mass of our country, with other &c. &c. &c., have a portentous aspect.—I fear our friends on the other side of the water, laboring in the same cause, have yet a great deal of crime & misery to wade through. My confidence has been placed in the head, not in the heart of Buonaparte. I hoped he would calculate truly the difference between the fame of a Washington & a Cromwell. Whatever his views may be, he has at least transferred the destinies of the republic from the civil to the military arm. Some will use this as a lesson

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against the practicability of republican government. I read it as a lesson against the danger of standing armies. Adieu, my ever respected & venerable friend. May that kind & overruling providence which has so long spared you to our wishes, still foster your remaining years with whatever may make them comfortable to yourself & soothing to your friends. Accept the cordial salutations of your affectionate friend.